

# ATEC UPDATE

A SPECIAL EDITION

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## ARFA Spearheads Training Blitz!

## More Than 350 Tap Into Skills Alberta Funding Assistance For Service Training

"I want my staff to feel that they are professionals at whatever they're doing and to be proud of the job they're doing," says Charlene White, general manager of Edmonton's Inn on 7th. "I want everybody to realize that the job they do is important."

White believes that training is the key to professionalism and a positive attitude. "When staff members have the skills and training they need, they feel a lot better about what they're doing."

Mario Nardelli, President of Shaker's Acres Banquet Hall & RV Park and the Law Courts Cafeteria, echoes White's views on building pride and performance through training. He adds, "Our entire industry needs to work to develop a more professional image."

He believes perception is most important. "If we learn to listen carefully, offer suggestions and serve our customers well, they will be happy and remember us."

As with other managers in Alberta's hospitality industry, White and Nardelli have taken advantage of a special training program organized and co-ordinated by the Alberta Restaurant and Food Services Association (A.R.F.A.).

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"Everybody involved deserves to be thanked for making this work."

- Darlene Gislason -

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### Funding Assistance

The Alberta Tourism Education Council (ATEC) provided the training in service excellence through its ALBERTA BEST and Certification programs. Skills Alberta, a service developed by Alberta Advanced Education and Career Development to help employers identify and meet their training needs, covered 50 per cent of the cost of ATEC's fees. Participating employers paid the other half.

"Cost is a factor in training," says George Lavertu, President of Smitty's Family Restaurants (Edmonton, Edson and Red Deer). "The Skills Alberta program allowed us to put more people through ALBERTA BEST seminars, sooner."

An advocate of training, Lavertu's Red Deer and Edson operations have been involved with ALBERTA BEST for some time. Under the Skills Alberta program, a total of 72 managers and employees in

Edmonton attended the service excellence seminars.

### Co-operative Effort

"It was truly a co-operative effort," said A.R.F.A. Manager Darlene Gislason. "The members of our industry asked for this program and were behind it all the way. Skills Alberta gave us wonderful support, and the ATEC and A.F.R.A. teams worked so well together. Everybody involved deserves to be thanked for making this work."

The assistance of Skills Alberta allowed 92 people to participate in Standards and Certification and more than 250 to receive ALBERTA BEST training. Gislason is now exploring the possibility of arranging another program for A.F.R.A. members.

### Industry Partnerships Sought

ATEC Executive Director Al Parsons also emphasizes the co-operative aspect of the program. Praising A.R.F.A. and its members for their initiative, he says, "This is an excellent example of what the future of ATEC will be -- working in close partnership with the industry associations."

*Continued ...*



Nardelli, a veteran of the hospitality industry, strongly endorses an on-going training program. He has monthly in-house sessions with his staff and, from time to time, supplements his own program with outside training.



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 Alberta Tourism Education Council





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## Skills Alberta ... Continued

Partnership with industry has always been fundamental to ATEC's role. Formed in 1987 as a three-way partnership of industry, education and government, ATEC uses private-sector expertise to develop its programs and to ensure that they meet the needs and requirements of tourism employers, managers and staff. Parsons points out that the Standards and Certification program was "designed by the industry for the industry."

Volunteer committees, made up of people experienced in their occupations, established the level of skills, attitudes and knowledge required in each occupation and set the standard for measuring efficient and effective performance.



The Alberta Tourism Education Council congratulates the following businesses for their participation in the A.R.F.A./SKILLS Alberta venture and commends them for their commitment to training.

### ALBERTA BEST

Smitty's Restaurants  
Convention Inn South  
Westward Inn  
Coast Terrace Inn  
Renford Inn  
Shaker's Acres  
ARFA  
Red Arrow

### Meeting Industry Needs

While Standards and Certification challenges individuals to develop their skills and demonstrate their competency, the ALBERTA BEST program is intended to yield a fast pay-off for employers and their employees.

"I want everybody to realize that the job they do is important."

- Charlene White -

The one- and two-day seminars for staff and managers provide "good solid basic tools and skills that can be implemented immediately," Parsons explains. "ALBERTA BEST very specifically tells you what you can do when you get back to your place of business."

Charlene White has nothing but praise for the ATEC programs. "We couldn't develop training programs like these on our own," she says. "They've taken the best from the industry and put it together for us."

White particularly likes the fact that ATEC training is available for employees in all positions -- including those that are not always highly valued.

### CERTIFICATION

Inn On 7th  
Village Park Inn  
Radisson Plaza Hotel  
Blackfoot Inn  
Royal Glenora Club  
Hospitality Inn  
Edmonton Northlands  
International Hotel  
Chateau Airport

Other managers find value in the program for the benefits of ATEC training.

"Professionalism" and "pride" are frequently mentioned. Employers note that their employees are happier, more confident in their abilities and more effective.

This translates into direct benefits for the employer. Staff require less supervision and turnover is reduced. Customers are more satisfied. They are more likely to return and, businesses have discovered, they often spend more money.

Darlene Gislasen agrees with her members. "Training accomplishes so much," she points out. "Our staff feel good about themselves. They project a positive image. By increasing the quality of the service we provide, we're making people happy when they visit us. Our businesses benefit and the economy benefits."



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON  
**ALBERTA BEST**  
SERVICE EXCELLENCE  
SEMINARS

AND THE  
**CERTIFICATION**  
PROGRAM

Dial the ATEC Info - Line  
**1-800-265-1283**



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Alberta Tourism Education Council  
12th Floor, Sterling Place  
9940 - 106 Street  
Edmonton, Alberta T5K 2N2